The PELMAN SYSTEM *of* MIND *and* MEMORY TRAINING :: ::

LESSON

No. 5

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THE PELMAN SYSTEM OF MIND & MEMORY TRAINING

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LESSON V.

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FOR THE SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT
OF MIND AND MEMORY
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Supplement

The E.M. Health Exercises.

LESSON V.

WILL-POWER.

1. In the previous Lessons of this Course we have discussed at some length many of the factors involved in the various processes of mental action and memory. We have now to turn to the vital subject of the WILL, the great motive power lying behind all mental and physical activity. We do so at this stage because so many students feel the need of instruction on the subject.

Numerous psychological experts have written long and learned treatises on the nature and functions of the Will, but as yet no one theory has been generally accepted as explaining exactly what Will is or where it resides. We can see its results, we can describe something of its manner of working, we can ascertain certain of the principles controlling its direction, but beyond this we cannot penetrate.

I. WILL AND OBSTINACY.

2. Will is very frequently confounded with obstinacy, and the results of such confusion are lamentable. A strong Will inevitably denotes a "strong man" in the best sense of the term, but obstinacy is invariably a sign of weakness. A man will often boast that when he has once "made up his mind nothing will induce him to change it." A great writer, however, has asserted with perfect truth that "the man with an unchangeable mind is an unchangeable ass." Unquestionably, the obstinate man is a stumbling block to himself and a source of incessant annoyance to all who are unfortunate

enough to be brought much into contact with him. A truly strong man is one whose actions are always proportioned by a right measure of intelligence and feeling.

II. THE MOTIVE FORCE.

3. We have remarked that Will is the motive force of the individual. Without Will the possession of a brilliant intellect and a phenomenal memory is utterly useless. The most perfect of locomotive engines is powerless to move either itself or anything else unless supplied with steam, and in precisely the same way the human mind is inert until animated with the force of Will. We may conceive most brilliant schemes and devise suggestions which are highly original; we may even infuse a limited degree of energy into their execution for a time; but unless we have sufficient determination or force of Will to continue to the end that which we have begun, most of our previous labour will be wasted.

4. This principle runs all through life. It concerns the plumber who promises to stop the leak in a cistern and never does so; it applies to the individual who is effective in speech but ineffective in action; to the employer who has many ideas for improvement but never puts them into practice; to the employee whose resolves die at birth. It affects no less intimately the student who is always dreaming of something to be accomplished during the to-morrow that never becomes to-day. Right feeling, right thinking, right action; these are the true standards and measure of a man.

The Weak-Willed Man.

5. Fortunately for the possessor of a weak Will, it is possible with no great difficulty to educate the Will. However, before explaining the

process by which a weak Will is transformed into a strong one, we must notice something of the difference between the weak and the strong Will. A weak Will is seen where some element of thought or feeling prevents the mind from coming to a decision, or from carrying out a decision already made. Suppose, by way of illustration, that you are an ardent politician and that a friend has asked you to aid him in running as an independent candidate for a neighbouring constituency. To this you agree, and you arrange to appear with him on a public platform in a week's time. When the hour of the meeting draws near, a huge crowd of angry and excited electors has gathered outside the hall wherein the meeting is to be held, and you begin to feel nervous. You turn tail and go home, earning for yourself the contempt of your friend and his more courageous supporters. In this instance the feeling of fear predominated in your mind and prevented you from going into the hall, because the attitude of the crowd was threatening, and you thought you might sustain personal injuries. Will-power was weak because its action was restricted by too strong a Feeling.

The Pale Cast of Thought.

6. Take now a different illustration of a weak Will. It is the case of a man who is so immersed in thinking about life that he never does anything at all beyond the duties absolutely essential to living. He can write a moral essay; he can outline a philosophical creed; he knows what we all ought to do, and of course he includes himself among the number, but he always fails at the critical moment. He is like Hamlet, the tragedy of whose career was that, having devoted his hours to *thought*, he was called upon to *act* — and could not.

Weakness of Will in such a case is due not to an excess of Feeling but to a depletion of Feeling by an excess of Thought.

Volcanic Wills.

7. Sometimes we meet with men who suffer rather from what may be termed "volcanic Will" than from weak Will. Something or somebody awakens in them a violent eruption, and for an hour they threaten the world with drastic happenings fluently outlined in a sudden accession of impulse; but when the outburst is exhausted, such persons are as weak-willed as ever. The volcano is again dormant; its force is spent for a while.

III. WILL AS DEPENDENT ON THOUGHT AND FEELING.

8. A strong Will is denoted by the presence of reason. In other words, Will-power is never exerted unless it can be justified mentally. These reflections give rise to the following truth:

Right thinking and right feeling lead to right willing.

To think in the right way, and with a due measure of emotion, is the true road to right action. Grasp that fact firmly. You have been exercising your Will-power every time you sat down to study a lesson or to work out an exercise. The modern craze of making the Will a separate something which can be made big and strong like a biceps muscle, is altogether wrong. You do not say: "To-morrow morning I will take an intellectual dumb-bell and exercise for twenty minutes and at the end of that period I shall have a great big Will!" And yet much of our present literature proceeds on this supposition. Naturally it leads to results that are by no means satisfactory. Weakness of Will is due to some defect in Thought or

Feeling, or both, and these defects in turn have often a purely physical origin.

The Tobacco Problem.

9. Take the case of a man who strongly desires to give up smoking. He is not playing with the matter: he really wants to be rid of the habit. Here Thought and Feeling are both dead against tobacco, and yet the man frequently finds it impossible to refuse a cigarette. Why? Because it is a *physical* appetite and insinuates itself into consciousness in spite of the strong protests of Thought and Feeling. For the time being the body rules the mind. The way to tackle the problem is to begin at the physical end of things and to adopt modern measures to ease the difficulty, so as to give what we call the mental powers a better chance of asserting themselves. There may be a few Samsons in the world who can go so far as to announce their decision to abstain from tobacco, and then flaunt their tempters successfully by smiling cynically at every offer of the weed; but most of us are cast in a very human mould and prefer rather to reduce the number of temptations than to run too many risks of a fall. We used the word habit just now—and it contains the whole truth about the Will.

IV. THE FORMATION OF HABITS.

10. We are, in reality, bundles of habits. Some of them are based on strong principles, and some are merely ways of doing things that do not depend on rigid rule. For instance, if you are a total abstainer you probably formed the habit of abstaining because intoxicants seriously disagreed with you, or because they ruined a member of your family, or perhaps on account of some social work in which you are

engaged. But your habit of wearing a particular kind of collar, and lunching at a certain restaurant, have not so serious a basis ; and yet they are habits just as much as abstinence is. The tragedies of life arise when bad habits are formed in connection with vital issues—the habits which injure health, ruin credit, and destroy character.

Giving up Cigarettes.

11. Now the problem of Will-power should not be approached from the side of the Will itself ; at any rate that is not the first consideration. On the contrary, we should turn our attention to the idea of forming *a new habit.* It is simpler and more effective than the method which makes a man analyse himself daily to see how much bigger his Will is than it used to be. Consider again the man who wishes to give up smoking. What ought to be his first concern in the work of creating a new habit ? Not the strength of his Will but the abolition of "smokes." If he smoked five cigarettes on Monday, three on Tuesday, and only one on Wednesday, he may congratulate himself on the diminishing quantity ; but the real battle comes when he smokes none at all. Even so, his Will-power can be allowed to take care of itself if he will only centre his attention on the new habit of being a non-smoker. In other words, he does not seek the *power to do* something : he wants to *do* it.

On Developing Punctuality.

12. Applied to business matters the same rule holds good. If you are unpunctual, you are guilty of wasting your own time and that of other people : consequently you desire to respect yourself the more, and to be less of a nuisance to others. You search for the origin of this bad habit and find it arises out of your

indifference to duty. You have never realised the importance of being in time ; hence you should first fill the vacancy in the departments of Thought and Feeling by cultivating a better ideal of duty. Then commences the plan to arise at an earlier hour, to get through more work in less time, in order that appointments may be kept and journeys completed according to schedule. In all these items, which make up a composite purpose, it is hardly necessary to consider Will-power : you prefer to keep your eyes on the ideal of being "on time," and on the excellent record you are making. You are not seeking power so much as punctuality.

V. RIGHT THOUGHT AND RIGHT FEELING MEAN RIGHT ACTION.

13. Take a further illustration. Every man has to submit to partial failures, *e.g.*, a fine advertising scheme goes wrong ; a new line of goods is badly turned out, despite close attention to preliminaries ; a member of the staff decamps with a big haul of money. To a weak man these are knock-down blows. Why ? Because he has not formed the habit of persistence. When the £500 advertising scheme went awry he was in a state of collapse for two days : as a friend put it, "the thing just raked him fore and aft." Envy of the man with enough Will-power to stand the shock, and to commence a new scheme, was not wanting ; he wonders how Jackson could smile so nonchalantly when he had received news that morning of the loss of £1,500 in what had been regarded as "a sure thing." Jackson has perhaps no more Will-power than the other man ; but he *thinks* better : he knows how to husband his forces, and by keeping his eyes on what *may be*, the power of the *has been* is diminished.

14. His Will is not put to too severe a test, because Feeling and Thought are neither of them in excess; if they were, he would inevitably lose control of himself to the extent of indulging in an agony of emotion that would rob his mind of peace and his body of strength. We do not say he will not in any case have to pull himself together at times, and in a direct manner summon all his resolutions against depressing facts; but the case is very different from the other one we noticed where Thought and Feeling were out of harmony, and unnecessary demands were made upon pure Will. As a rule, the man who has to put up a series of great struggles for conquest, no matter what the trouble may be, is a man whose life has been over-developed on one side of it, and the effort to regain harmony is both pathetic and tragic. But if this single truth is once gripped firmly—that right Thinking and right Feeling lead to right action—the problems of the Will are more than half solved, because the three phases of the mind work in unison.

VI. RESISTANCE AND AGGRESSION.

15. The question of habit—a tendency to repeat past conduct—when considered in its relation to Will-power, may be discussed under the negative aspect of *resistance*, and the positive aspect of *aggression*. There are some things that we are determined not to do because we know and feel that they belong to the "ought not" group: there are other things we have resolved to do because we are persuaded that they are wise actions. Let us suppose there is any weakness manifest in either direction; that we fail to resist, or we fail to fulfil, our resolves. What is the cause? Want of practice, or else

poor practice. How does a rifleman develop into a good shot from being a poor shot? By practice. He forms the habit of hitting the bull's eye, and the habit is made up of quite a long series of repeated actions. In a real sense this is how we exercise Will-power, as such.

16. Mastery in the arts of resistance or aggression is not an easy sum that can be worked mentally. That is where Will has a different field from Thought and Feeling. It operates in the sphere of action. You can deepen your powers of reflection by thinking in your own room: you can educate your feelings by sitting comfortably in the theatre, watching a fine drama: but your *Will* brings you into contact with real life—in the office, in the street, in politics, in travelling—everywhere. Practice in Will-power means close touch with facts, not once but many times: and at last character is formed, and character has been defined as "a completely fashioned Will."

The Discipline of Practice.

17. The weakness of some men, perhaps we might say most men, in this matter is that they never seriously take up the discipline of practice. They insult Thought and Feeling by ignoring the commands of both. Take the case of a man who has been told that when he is a proficient scholar in commercial French he will receive a substantial advance of salary. Every Monday morning he resolves that he "really must begin that French study, you know," but Saturday finds him just where he was before. The primal defect here is not in Will—it is in Feeling. He has no strong impelling motive: the salary advance does not stir him deeply enough. But when he becomes engaged, suddenly, and he thinks of money for a house, you can find him next Monday at lunch-time testing the

merits of French grammars and dictionaries; so energetic is he now that he has Will-power enough to take German up also if the governor will give him a second advance.

18. And yet if he had at the very commencement begun the systematic practice of doing things—carrying out resolves respecting details or important issues—he would have formed a habit that could easily be transferred from one sphere to another. Thus, whilst it is always true that to think rightly and feel rightly leads to the right kind of action, it is also true that action calls for repetition ere a habit can be formed. The bad habits are easy: not so those which are best for one's welfare—at least they are not easy at first, any more than shorthand is, or chess, or trigonometry. The ease comes later, and when that time arrives, resistance and aggression, as circumstances may require, are no more difficult than weak acquiescence in the former state.

VII. HOW THE EXPERT DOES HIS WORK EASILY.

19. Have you ever watched a mathematician working out an intricate problem? If so, you will remember how he seems to leap to conclusions by the use of symbols which, whilst occupying little space, save much time and argument. This point is referred to by Prof. Whitehead in his "Introduction to Mathematics." After explaining some figures he says: "This example shows that, by the aid of symbolism, we can make transitions in reasoning almost mechanically by the eye, which would otherwise call into play the higher faculties of the brain. It is a profoundly erroneous truism, repeated by all copybooks and by eminent people when they are making speeches, that we should cultivate the habit of thinking of what

we are doing. The precise opposite is the case. Civilisation advances by extending the number of important operations which we can perform without thinking about them." Exactly. That is what the Pelman Course does for all its serious students.

Habit and the Subconscious.

20. Take observation. The man who has gone through these exercises never thinks about the exercises themselves; he sees, and notices, and thinks—all in a moment; and he does these things with much greater efficiency than ever before. He has no need to say, when he rises in the morning, "I must keep my eyes and ears open to-day." He used to do that once—he was a learner then; but reflective observation became a habit, and now, quite subconsciously, he observes men and things with a keenness hitherto unknown. It is the same with his thought-forces. Previously he cast about here and there, wondering what it would be best to "take-up"; or else he never wondered at all. Then he got an idea with some soul in it. He nurtured that idea until it became a real power. To-day he is hard at work trying to embody it in action—but he seldom expresses it in words, even to himself. Ambition is a habit with him; he moves because he must. Memory has the same story to tell. He toiled with exercises and methods for a season, until the training began to have its due effect. Remembrance, once a mighty effort, is now almost a lightning process because attention and concentration are ready servants of his Will, yielding a kind of knowledge that is vivid and permanent. You will, eventually, recognise yourself in these descriptions.

VIII. "CAN'T" AND "CAN."

21. Take the more practical matters; for example the difficulties and set-backs of business

life. Here, a strong man's spirits never fail him, although you can see by the occasional gravity of his face that he has sometimes been hard hit. He has learned the art of wise self-control—not the self-control that is sheer stern resolution, terribly wearing to mind and body alike, but the control that comes from a confident belief that "the best is yet to be." The mental training which enables a man to conquer circumstances, instead of allowing himself to be conquered by them, is worth as much as life itself; and this is all the more true when we reflect that the conquest is carried out with the ease of mastery and not with the agony of striving. Such mastery has a secret, and we find it in auto-suggestion.

IX. THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL.

22. Every man has a Will-problem of some kind. You may have two or three. Select one of them, preferably the one which gives most trouble, and analyse it carefully. The first point to be decided is as to how far you really desire to do what you say you have resolved to do, and which you feel great difficulty in carrying out. Very often the desire is weak because it has never been *formulated*: you have a fleeting wish every now and again to form a new habit and thus to get rid of an old one. But this is not enough. You need a conference with yourself—an hour alone in close debate with the whole of the factors involved—and a resolution should be carried with the unanimity of Thought, Feeling and Will. You are then "on your honour," so to speak. You cannot go back on yourself.

Curing the "Novel" Habit.

23. If you will in this way provide your resolutions with better engine power they will reach

their destination safely and at a higher speed. You thus remedy the defect in Feeling.

Suppose you wish to cure the *novel* habit, by which we mean an over-devotion to fiction, to the detriment of other things. First, be assured that you have a deep conviction that you are spending too much time on reading fiction. Second, tell yourself that other duties must receive more attention. Third, apportion your time and keep to it rigidly. This method is applicable to any habit which you regard as unfortunate.

24. Should the desire prove to be sufficiently strong to pass the examination you impose upon it, you may find yourself faced with another difficulty ; that is, you *want* to take a certain course of action, but feel you *can't.* You are quite certain about your inability. Here you have to remedy the defect in Thought. Ask yourself *why* you cannot carry out your resolve. The fear is part of a judgment you have arrived at. Having surveyed the situation and found a desirable object, you decide you cannot reach it. But why ? Experiment alone can determine the issue. Don't try with the fear of failure. Expect success. Analyse your Will-problems to see how much reason you are putting into them. Resistance and aggression are the two movements of Will, and there is a wrong way of executing both. Failure is often accounted for by leaving too much to *force* and not giving enough to *intelligence.*

Regulating Personal Expenditure.

25. In matters like the spending of money, weakness of Will is sometimes manifested. "I could not help myself," we hear it said, "the thing was such a bargain and it stared me in the face." Purchasing bargains simply because they *are* bargains and not because we really

want the articles, is habit pure and simple. The defect lies in Feeling—a desire to possess for possession's sake. Consequently, the Feeling needs more attention than the Will. If you can feel differently about bargains, you will act differently. The desire should be analysed and its crudity exposed to view. Apply the same method to any form of over-expenditure—amusements, for instance. The man who regrets he cannot keep away from the theatre should recreate his ideals. *That* is where he is wrong. If he can adjust his life so as to attain, in thought and conviction, the mean between dissipation and asceticism, he will not lament the helpless spending of money, loss of time, and boredom which result upon over-indulgence.

The Value of a Daily Record.

26. Keep something more than a mental record of your *practice*. A time-table for discipline's sake may not be necessary, but serious attention to a Will-problem demands at least a semblance of method. The happy-go-lucky style of some people fully explains why they fail in practice. They are terribly in earnest on Monday, flat as ditch-water on Tuesday, a trifle determined on Wednesday, and quite indifferent for the rest of the week. Now the secret of keeping some kind of record of your efforts to accomplish a purpose is that you are stimulated to greater efforts by the reading over of your past notes.

27. Further, very strenuous effort brings you nearer to the efficiency stage. Suppose you determine to reduce the number of mistakes you make in business. It is of some useful import to be able to look through a week's record and find nothing against you; and you start next Monday morning with a keen appetite for accuracy. Even if you had a

blotted day when you sent a letter and forgot the cheque, the reminder in your note-book would bring the need of an errorless habit before you. Study *that* day to find out why you made the slip ; then watch for a recurrence and avoid a second mistake.

X. AUTO-SUGGESTION.

28. To develop Will-power, you should aim at the formation of desirable habits by means of auto-suggestion.

Before dealing with the meaning of auto-suggestion, we will inquire into the special use of the latter half of that hyphenated word—suggestion. In ordinary speech it means a proposal to say or do something. For instance, this course of study has helped you to formulate a plan of life, and has shown you the right way to realise it. You are pleased with the result, and, speaking to a friend about it, you "suggest" that he ought to follow your example. The friend, believing in your judgment, acts on the advice, and his letter says "Following the suggestion of," etc.

29. But this word has attained a new and more specialised meaning during the last 25 years: the suggestion which comes from one person to another on the everyday plane is only half of the notion it conveys. The other half is made up partly of unspoken proposals, so to speak, that come from objects and persons around us—suggestions of which we may not be fully conscious ; and partly of the systematic use of the suggestive principle for medical and educative purposes.

The heads under which this most vital subject will be discussed, are:

(1) The Unspoken Suggestions of Life.
(2) Spoken Suggestions in General.
(3) Medical Suggestion.
(4) Educational Suggestion.

These are not four different things. They are simply four applications of *one* thing.

Unspoken Suggestions.

30. In the life you live from day to day you are acting out the principles of suggestion, one aspect of which is *imitation*. Why do you not wear the clothes of an Englishman of the Elizabethan period with all their wealth of colour? Because you would be inconveniently conspicuous: it is easier—and safer—to dress as others do in modern clothing. You need not, of course, imitate other men servilely: indeed you have full liberty to choose your own patterns; but the garments themselves must be of the conventional kind, or you are in danger of being adjudged a freak. The rule is this: that we have a tendency to do what the great majority of people suggest we should do as seen in the example they set us.

The Imitative Tendency.

31. Not only so, but we have a tendency to do things which individual people do. You do not allow a child to play with another child afflicted with St. Vitus' dance, because you know the child will feel a suggestion to imitate the contortions of the other's nervous complaint; and you know yourself that if you spend half an hour with a confirmed stammerer, you feel a tendency to stammer also—just as when one member of the family circle yawns, the others will soon follow suit. The friend from the country, who drops in to see you occasionally, says he likes his cottage by the lake because the air is pure and he has no temptation to spend his money. Precisely. A walk down Oxford Street is a lesson in suggestion. The window dresser may never have heard of the word in this sense, but he acts on the principle all the same; for his

artistic disposal of the goods has one end in view, viz., to suggest an immediate purchase. Everything we see, hear and know is suggestion: it acts upon our faculties of desire; and character is the power of selecting the best and rejecting the worst. So much for the unspoken part of our subject.

Spoken Suggestions.

32. Spoken suggestion is not very different: the main feature about it is that it is *personal* and therefore stronger. I may look at a shop window, admire the goods, think of buying some—and pass on. But if a friend comes up whilst I am looking, he may urge me to make a purchase, and the silent suggestion is matured by a personal appeal. This illustration shows that, however strong may be the influence of environment, it is not so strong as that which is exerted by the human factor. That is why the society of strong men, intellectually and morally, is better than the society of a nondescript class, whose suggestive power is either bad, or too miscellaneous to be of service. It is not snobbery to get into the best environment. That word of ill repute is reserved to denote the assumption of superiority without the intellectual evidences thereof.

Medical Suggestion.

33. Medical suggestion is more specific than either of the two already considered. It is generally called "psycho-therapeutics." We will suppose you are ill and suffering from insomnia. The doctor, at a suitable time, visits you and puts you in a sleepful position, telling you to close your eyes and yawn. He then suggests aloud that you feel sleepy and that you are going to sleep in a minute or two. If you were not truly ill you would be inclined to be amused or sceptical; but you have

suffered agonies during sleepless nights, and you are ready for any method that might cure you. Many have been cured in this way; many indeed have cured themselves.

34. When the doctor makes the suggestion, it is called hetero-suggestion—hetero means "other." When *you* make them, it is called auto-suggestion—auto means "self." Note this carefully. To abolish a pain you must centre your mind on something else: just as a soldier "forgets" a raging toothache when the excitement of the battle increases. You must also act as if the pain or affliction did not exist. Should you be afraid to travel on a tube railway because you have a feeling of being smothered (claustrophobia), you should affirm that you *can* travel in this way: but affirmations are of no use unless you make an experiment. So next time you have the feeling, not only say you *can*, but descend in the lift and travel in the train. Overcome the difficulty once, and it becomes weaker: overcome it many times and it disappears, unless you allow your health to decline.

Thoughts Tend to Become Actions.

35. No medical man claims that suggestion can cure all maladies, or that it can cure simple maladies in all individuals, for some persons cannot use suggestion at all: they are lacking in imagination. But, as a method of treating nervous diseases especially, it is on the upgrade: and the scientific basis is this:—that every thought, affirmed and reaffirmed, tends to become an action. Think long enough that you are ill, and, although well, you become ill; think that you are well, and persist in acting as if you were, and, although disposed to be ill, you increase your power of health. This is the

principle; and although it would be foolish for a man with advanced cancer to try to "suggest" it away, it would not be foolish for a man possessed of average health to suggest the minor ailments of the body out of existence.

XI. USES IN EDUCATION AND BUSINESS.

36. Educational suggestion follows close on the heels of the medical—that is, as to its operation. The word educational is not here used in a narrow and restricted sense: we mean education in the schools, and concentration *in* business, *for* business. How is suggestion used in these departments? It is used to overcome difficulties in precisely the same way as the physician uses it to overcome maladies. A boy who says he cannot do his sums is taken in hand and quietly shown the how and why of decimals or equations: and, instead of being allowed to think these things are difficult, his mind is made to reflect on their interesting qualities: he is told that he *can*; and he is asked to tell himself he can. A man in business, with adult intelligence, may train his mind in the same way. The difficulties ahead are real enough, but if he allows his mind to dwell on them he gets the suggestion that he cannot overcome them. He must tell himself ten times a day he *can*: and when he feels that he can, he will.

The Sceptic Answered.

37. The sceptic will say, "Do you mean to tell me that if a man believes he can succeed in any legitimate desire—one that is in keeping with his natural abilities—he will *therefore* attain his desire?"

No, not altogether: but we will put the matter in a nutshell. Take your own case. You

have ambition and you are working hard to realise it. Your friend George is also working hard to realise *his* ambition; but, whereas he believes he can ultimately succeed, *you*, in spite of your diligence, have a sort of half fear you will fail. What makes the difference between you? Suggestion. George knows as keenly as anybody what is before him: but every day he says "I can"; you, on the other hand, fall into doubt and say "I may not, after all." You may not relax a single effort, but doubt and fear eat some of the strength out of your resolve. What you need is training in Pelman methods of auto-suggestion. When you rise in the morning, and when you retire at night, suggest power, mastery, and conquest. And remember the law: every thought, especially a feeling-thought, tends to become an action; repeated actions transmute themselves into habit.

38. If every morning and evening you tell yourself you look and feel ill; and if, in addition, you assume the attitude of a sick man, holding your head in your hands, complaining to your friends, and taking physic, you will appreciably reduce the tone of your system and actually become ill. The same law holds good the other way. Think success, dream success, believe it, speak it, act like it—and, behold, successful things come your way. There is no magic about it. It is a truth as old as the hills. Years and years ago Talleyrand embodied it in his saying, "Nothing succeeds like success."

So many men think and act the other way. They are always fearing failure, and they have often to say—"That which I most feared has come upon me." They deliberately stifle hope: or, if they do not stifle it, they let it die a death due to exposure.

39. You will perhaps say, that all this looks very well on paper, but that it cannot be reduced to practice. As the Pelman course is nothing if not practical, we at once join issue with such an objection, and proceed to give an account of how a sales manager applied suggestion to the putting through of a big deal. A few business men, all of them in the forties, were gathered together at luncheon, interchanging their experiences as they ate their chops and steaks. The sales manager to whom we refer, after hearing how one man had failed to carry through a certain scheme, said, "If you will pardon me I will tell you why you did not succeed. You did not go forward in the spirit of confidence, a spirit which must not be confused with that of braggadocio or conceit."

40. "Let me give you a leaf out of my own experiences. I had been selling goods for twenty years before I ever heard of the law of suggestion. At first I laughed at it, and prevented my wife from being cured by a physician when he wished to use the law to cure a nervous trouble from which she was suffering. But when one of my friends gave me a book about suggestion as applied to education and business I began to think there was something in it. And when I persuaded my wife to go through a medical form of treatment with quite successful results, I felt more sure than ever that there was something in it, even though I met with cases where the experiment ended in failure. I studied the book thoroughly, and began to carry out some of its principles. I started in this way: so long as I could convince myself that the sale of my goods to a certain buyer was not impossible, I always went to do the selling with the feeling that I had already

succeeded in making a sale. The result was that I lived in a state of hopefulness all day long, and this enabled me to get the best out of my abilities; every faculty was alert, my memory for details was always in instant readiness, and I carried with me the atmosphere of the man who *can*."

41. "I frankly admit I sometimes failed, but I have the consolation of knowing that the failure was not due to any fault of my own ; it lay with circumstances in the buyer's life or business which I could not control. Last week I formulated a sale plan which somewhat staggered even my confidence in myself; and it was some time before I could convince myself the scheme was feasible. Finally, however, I adopted the plan and proceeded to put it into operation, believing it was already a success. It went through all right, and of its kind it was the biggest deal ever done in my line. Now if you will contrast my present policy with that which I had followed twenty years previously, you will see what an advantage the use of suggestion has been to my affairs."

How the Salesman Thinks.

42. "In the first period of my salesmanship, when I was on the road, I had the following states of mind with regard to selling goods :—

(1) I don't think I shall sell any goods.
(2) I might sell some, but I am afraid not.
(3) I have a good chance of selling goods.
(4) I am certain I shall make a sale.

Nowadays I have abolished the first three states of mind. I always go out myself in the spirit of certainty, and I instruct my men to cultivate the same frame of mind."

43. Here the sales manager paused, and the other man said, "But what is the use of being

certain if in your heart of hearts you know there can be no certainty ?"

The sales manager smiled agreeably and replied :

"You are a practical man—look at this matter in a practical way. If one of your men went out saying, 'I am certain I can sell these goods,' and another went out saying, 'I am certain I cannot although I'll try,' which man would send in the orders ? The first man, of course. The second man might give excellent reasons why people would not buy, and therefore why he could not sell, but proper mental training would show him that positive sales can never spring from negative convictions. He might be quite sincere in his belief that he could not sell your goods, but ask him to suggest to himself that he *can*, and to *act* as if he can, and behold he *will* ; at any rate, he will sell more, far more, than if he started out full to the brim with 'I can't.'"

The "Contradiction" of Suggestion.

44. Here the sales manager paused again, and the other man interposed :

"That sounds right enough," he said, "but it seems to me you make a man into a walking contradiction.* I have no man on my staff who says 'I can't.' I should dismiss him if I had : but suppose, for argument's sake, that I have such a man, and I tell him to use auto-suggestion. He will go out on the road with two distinct and contrary ideas. In one part of his brain he has a conviction that he *cannot*

* Professor McDougall, in his "Social Psychology," (p. 96.) defines thus : "Suggestion is a process of communication resulting in the acceptance with conviction of the communicated proposition, *in the absence of logically adequate grounds for its acceptance.*"

sell my goods; in another part of his brain is a second conviction, growing in strength, to the effect that he *can* sell my goods. So that as he works for me there is a continual strife in his mind between 'can' and 'can't' and it is ten to one the 'turn-downs' will award the palm to 'can't.' Is a man likely to do much with such an acute contradiction inside his head?"

45. The sales manager rubbed his hands gleefully and replied:

"My dear sir, you must admit that if the outcome of this contradiction is a victory for 'can' it is better for your profits, and better for the man's commissions. Besides, the contradiction is only seeming. When my wife was suffering from nervous twitchings, the doctor told her she was not suffering in that way, and he instructed her that she must assure herself she was free from them. You may call that a contradiction if you like, but it ended in a victory for the suggestion. It is precisely the same in all business matters. There are many things which seem too big, too ambitious, too difficult to accomplish and we therefore say we 'cannot'; and when we say we 'can,' there looms before us this contradiction of yours; but in nine cases out of ten the victory goes to 'can,' and the big thing that frightened us is a realised achievement." And let us say here that courses in salesmanship do not necessarily make salesmen. The mind needs training before the technique of selling can be mastered.

We all Sell Something.

46. This is a true narrative and is rich in reflection for every man who has a living to earn. We must believe that everybody lives by selling something. Even the man who does not work sells his capital to the borrower for capital

plus interest in return ; the doctor and the lawyer sell their knowledge to the buying public ; and the office man and the office woman sell their services to an employer. Of course, what we call the *goods* are very different in kind and quality ; a man who sells bacon and eggs disposes of commodities very different from the surgeon who sells his skill at £50 an operation, but it is the same principle in both cases ; there is a party to sell and there is a party to buy. Therefore you know what you have to sell to the public, or to an employer, and the amount of your income depends on the quality of that which you dispose of and the manner in which you do it. Auto-suggestion shows you how you can increase the value of your materials and your methods of sale. It opens out to you a vast prospect of advance in every way ; it abolishes the spirit of fear that results in "I cannot," and in its stead creates the energetic "I can."

47. There is a difference between the practice of auto-suggestion and that of mesmerism or even of hypnotism. To suggest a purchase to any man is not to mesmerise him or to hypnotise him ; because to do *that*, you would have to deprive him of normal consciousness and Will-power ; he would have to be entirely under your control ; but in making suggestions to yourself for your advancement you do so without interfering in the least with the normal operations of the mind ; indeed, you are fulfilling one of the mind's great laws, namely, "every thought, persistently held, tends to become an action."

XII. RULES FOR AUTO-SUGGESTION.

48. Although auto-suggestion is applicable at all times, and for every purpose, it is probably

most efficacious when systematically practised immediately upon retiring to bed for the night. If you go to sleep with an idea in your mind, it will tend to sink into the permanent subconsciousness and to become an integral factor in it. The careful observance of a few rules will assist in making the results more definite and enduring. We will illustrate these rules by applying them particularly to the improvement of the memory by auto-suggestion, but they may be utilised in exactly the same manner for the strengthening of the Will, the cure of indolence, or the relief of neurasthenia.

1. The suggestion must be positive and unhesitating. There must be no mere expression of a desire about it, nor must it deal exclusively with the future. It should begin with the present and extend to the future. Thus, as soon as you are in bed, say to yourself: "My memory is improving. I can and do remember. To-morrow my memory will be even better than it is now, though now it is better than it was yesterday. To-morrow I shall forget nothing, and I shall be able to recollect with ease everything I desire to recall." Repeat these and similar phrases until you actually fall asleep.
2. The suggestion must be made with sincere conviction. You must not allow yourself to doubt as to the result. If, in spite of all your efforts, you find yourself tempted to question the value of auto-suggestion, reassure yourself suggestively. Say to yourself: "Such doubts are absurd and unworthy. Other people have good memories, so, of course, I also have a good memory."
3. In making an auto-suggestion, the mind must concentrate itself on the suggestion,

and must not be tempted to wander off into speculations as to the ultimate advantages which will accrue. You may, if you prefer to do so, employ a regular formula for your auto-suggestions; but should you do so, you must be on the alert to see that the repetition of the formula *does not become so mechanical* that at the time of its nightly repetition the greater proportion of your attention is directed to other subjects.

4. The auto-suggestion must be practised regularly. Do not let any feeling of fatigue induce you to omit it. According to some psychologists, the greater the fatigue of the mind, the more powerfully operative will be the auto-suggestion. Continue it right up to the very moment of sleep.
5. If you can do so conveniently, repeat portions of the auto-suggestion aloud. This is not necessary, but it is sometimes an additional assistance.
6. Reinforce the auto-suggestion by repeating it when you awake during the night.
7. Repeat the auto-suggestion to yourself occasionally during the day-time.
8. Do not vary the subject of the auto-suggestion from night to night, but persevere with the same subject for many successive nights. Avoid anything like concentration of thought on a difficulty that distresses you. In that way you accentuate it. Try to forget it after using auto-suggestion.

Suggestion as an Aid to Early Rising.

49. Auto-suggestion can be used to form a habit of rising at a certain time in the morning.

For this purpose, you should, on retiring to bed at night, suggest to yourself that you will wake up at the hour desired. Suppose the time in question is to be 6 a.m. You may reinforce the suggestion by tapping your head six times with your finger or knuckle. This particular experiment may not succeed on the first few attempts, but perseverance will so develop the subconscious "time sense" that eventually it will be almost infallible.

XIII. SOLUTION OF PRACTICAL PROBLEMS.

50. From this experiment, you may advance to a further one: that of suggesting you can overcome a difficulty—let it be the mastery of the calculus, or the stubborn refusal of your next door neighbour to sell you his shop at a good price for your extension purposes, or the seeming inability to tide over a difficult financial period. Select your toughest problem, and before retiring suggest you *can* and *will* find a way out. Do it fairly, and practise the prescribed method with a due sense of its truth and advantages. This is character building in reality. You are changing yourself from a limp nothing into a man. Perhaps your weakest point is cynicism, the *blasé* outlook on life; nothing is pure, nothing is real, everything is hypocritical. To get rid of it, or at least seven-eighths of it, you cultivate greater generosity of disposition by affirming the existence of such a quality in your nature, and by stifling reflections which affirm almost every evil of every man you meet.

Don't "fight" Evils.

51. The way to overcome any sort of evil, by which we mean the "undesirable," is not to *fight* the evil but to develop the opposite quality. Fear is conquered by practising courage;

cynicism by practising charity. One point more in conclusion : *success depends on practice.* Why does a good golf player never fail to hit the little white ball ? Because he is an expert at the game. His eyes and his hands are the ready servants of a trained mind. So it is with auto-suggestion. If you fail at first, don't say it is therefore false as an alleged law of mind. The falsity lies in your inexperience. Your faculties must be trained before they can respond to the delicate movements of a force which has perhaps been given little scope for exercise in your thought and actions.

52. There are formal exercises in Will-power, but we prefer the student to practise in the direction wherein he wishes to succeed. He knows where he is weak : let his exercise be to make himself strong by using the principles laid down in this lesson.

DON'TS

1. Don't say "My Will is weak." Say "It is strong." That is the way to develop its strength.

2. Don't interpret the violent man as a strong willed man. He has not Will enough to control his feelings.

3. Don't *try* to develop a strong will by merely "willing" strongly. Make your thoughts and feelings right, and Will-power will "come."

4. Don't fear failure. Say: "I can," and you "will."

5. Don't coddle your anxieties as to the future. That is how they become giants to conquer you.

6. Don't trouble about anybody, or anything, so long as you *Will* the right thing and *do* it.

XIV. IMAGERY TRAINING.

53. We cannot do better than preface this section of the imagery exercises by quoting the words of Sir Francis Galton, one of the pioneers of experimental Psychology. He says: "A visual image is the most perfect form of mental representation wherever the shape, position, and relations of objects in space are concerned. It is of importance in every handicraft and profession where design is required. The best workmen are those who visualize the whole of what they propose to do before they take a tool in hand. Strategists, artists of all denominations, physicists who contrive new experiments, and in short all who do not follow routine, have need of it. . . A faculty that is of importance in all technical and artistic occupations, that gives accuracy to our perceptions and justness to our generalizations, is starved by lazy disuse, instead of being cultivated judiciously in such a way as will, on the whole, bring the best return."

EXERCISES.

Exercise XIV.

So far, we have dealt chiefly with only one of your senses, but as a rule you remember by more than one. Thus, if you think of Mr. Kent, the manager of that fine new shop in High Street, Slough, on whom you called last week, you may be able to see his face and the clothes he wore; this is *visual imagery*. You may be able to hear his peculiarly deep voice; this is *auditory imagery*. You may be able to feel yourself walking up to him and pointing out things to him; this is *motor imagery*. In ordinary life, therefore, more than one kind of image will rush to help memory. It is very important for you to know what images you

use, what their qualities are, and how you can improve them.

Below are nine letters arranged in groups of three. Learn them, commencing with the first letter in the column and proceeding to the right. Then close the book and try to recall each row from right to left, from bottom to top, from top to bottom, and diagonally—as K.O.S.

B M S
G O L
K T P.

If you succeed in these operations by saying "Let me see, the first line is Q M K (as it might be), therefore from right to left would be K M Q, you use what is substantially motor imagery ; but if you form a mental picture of the letters, and, seeing it in your mind's eye, announce the required order, you use visual imagery.

This exercise, then, shows you which images you use. Now it is possible that if you are, say, a designer, or a clerk, or a window dresser, you need visual images more than motor images. By practising this exercise, and determining to see the pattern of the letters in your mind, you will thus strengthen your visual imagery.

Images and Mental Development.

A word may now be added as to how these exercises help in the development of mental power. It will be remembered that most of our knowledge comes through the senses of sight and hearing ; consequently, the recollection of the knowledge thus obtained depends to a large extent on the vividness of the images involved ; for, if they are weak, the recall is weak. On the other hand, if the image was vivid, the recall is likely to be vivid also.

In any case, it is wise occasionally to *recall* those images which we wish to retain permanently; we thereby increase the number and quality of our mental treasures. More than that; we increase the raw material, so to speak, out of which new ideas are made. The poet, for instance, not only sees and hears with more than ordinary acuteness, but his instinct for language, taken in conjunction with his stock of exquisite images, enables him to conceive and express those new thoughts that become classic utterances. In like manner the merchant with trained senses gathers vivid images from every business association, and these are the basis of the new schemes (wrought by his constructive imagination) which surprise his competitors. We cannot make bricks without straw; and to think in the best way we must have the materials in the shape of vivid and numerous images.

Exercise XV.

Below are given some verses from three poets with the images underlined. Study these quotations carefully, and try to reconstruct the images they suggest. Select other passages and treat them in the same way. You will not only learn the beauties of English poetry, but develop your power of imagery.

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon, large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed in the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm, sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick, sharp scratch

And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each.
—*Browning.*

All in a hot and copper sky the bloody sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand, no bigger than the moon.—*Coleridge.*

I watch the mowers, as they go
Through the tall grass, a white-sleeved row.
With even strokes their scythes they swing,
In tune their merry whetstone ring.
Behind, the nimble youngsters run,
And toss the thick swaths in the sun.
The cattle graze, while, warm and still,
Slopes the broad pasture, basks the hill,
And bright, where summer breezes break,
The green wheat crinkles like a lake.
The butterfly and bumble-bee,
Come to the pleasant woods with me ;
Quickly before me runs the quail,
Her chickens skulk behind the rail;
High up the lone wood-pigeon sits,
And the woodpecker pecks and flits,
Sweet woodland music sinks and swells,
The brooklet rings its tinkling bells,
The swarming insects drone and hum,
The partridge beats his throbbing drum.
—*Trowbridge.*

Here again you must apply this knowledge to your work. If, for instance, the result of this exercise shows you that your auditory images of voices are very poor (and your work entails much interviewing), it behoves you to improve the quality of these images by training.

SPECIAL EXERCISES FOR MIND TRAINING AND HEALTH

By EUSTACE MILES, M.A.

The exercises prepared by Mr. Miles will suit the requirements of the majority of students, but where exercises of a special character, and advice as to diet and matters of a confidential nature are concerned, the Secretary of the Pelman Institute will give an introduction to Mr. Miles, who has consented to treat all Pelman students at special fees.

Fifth Lesson.

While you are dressing, and again at night while you are undressing, consider some fresh advantages of the right exercises rightly done. It is wonderful what an effect they have on one's enjoyment of life, and on one's feelings in general. A man may feel miserable, and as if the whole world were against him; but, if he goes through the right breathing and other exercises, he will end up with the opposite feeling—that all his circumstances are thoroughly satisfactory, and that people are quite nice!

There are many reasons for this. One of them is that the right exercises draw the organs up into a better position. When a person is depressed, his organs are depressed; when he is down-hearted, his heart is down. The right exercises help to bring the organs into their proper place, and, of course, as we have seen already, the right position of, and functioning of the organs improve the circulation, and relieve the pressure of blood in the brain, the pressure that so often is one of the causes of unsatisfactory feelings.

Then there is poise and balance. Deep and full breathing of the proper kind has a decided effect on the poise and balance of the mind, and of the body as well; and this Course of Exercises includes special movements that improve the balance of the body and the control of the different muscles.

When we get a quality for the body, it becomes far easier to get that quality for the mind as well. Similarly, if we master regularity in exercises, it is easier to master regularity in anything else that we have to do.

Another great advantage of exercises is that they are a splendid opportunity for Self-suggestion; for example, as you inhale you can suggest to yourself and imagine that you are inhaling not only the life-giving oxygen, but also vigour, energy, happiness, etc. As you exhale, you can imagine yourself as exhaling not only carbonic acid, but also everything undesirable; but it is better not to mention the undesirable things by name.

Now for a few fresh Exercises.

I.—In Bed.

Lying flat on your back again, hold your hands, not over your abdomen, but over your chest, one on each side, about the middle of the ribs. Close your mouth, and, as you inhale through your nostrils, send your ribs forwards, and out to the sides. Hold them thus for a moment as you hold the breath in; then, as you breathe out, contract the ribs, and, at the end of the contraction, force them in gently with the hands. Repeat this a few times without straining. This is the kind of breathing in which women as a rule excel men; they breathe better with the upper and middle part of their apparatus, whereas men breathe better with the lower. There is no reason, however, why men should not breathe much better with the middle and upper breathing, and women much better with the lower or diaphragmatic breathing.

Still lying in bed, combine the arm and leg stretchings already suggested. First, keep

your left hand and arm and left leg and foot limp, and stretch your right leg stiff (with its knee back) in front of you, with the toes as far away from you as they will go. At the same time, stretch your right hand up above your head, with the fingers extended out and bent back. Let your right hand be rotated as before, with the fingers kept stiff, as far as it will go back, and to the right. Hold it there for a moment while you are keeping the toes of your right foot as far away from you as they will go. Then, as you rotate your hand in the opposite direction, so that the thumb comes out a little to the right, send your heel down instead of your toes. Repeat this a few times, being sure not to grip with the left hand at all; the left hand must be limp and still. And do not poke forwards with the chin; keep the head well back. Then shake out your right foot and leg, and your right hand and arm, and let them rest, and go through the exercise with the left foot and leg, and the left arm and hand, instead. Then go through the exercise with both feet and legs and both hands and arms together. But be sure not to strain.

II.—Out of Bed.

Standing with your legs comfortably apart, and your knees well pressed back, and not letting your heels rise from the ground at all, but keeping them planted firmly on the ground, and having your chin in, and the small of your back hollow, first bend the trunk forwards gently from the hips, then bend it back; then bend it forwards to the right, then back to the left; then forwards to the left, then back to the right. Keep the head and shoulders facing forwards all the time. Then rotate the trunk pretty fully, but of course without strain; send the shoulders forwards to the left; then, still forwards, across to the right; then backwards to the right; then, still backwards, across to the left; then forwards to the left again. Then reverse the direction.

Next, letting the hands swing freely, but still keeping the legs straight and stiff, and the heels firm on the ground, swing round as far as you can go with the shoulders and the trunk to the left. The left shoulder and hand will lead the way, as it were. Then swing round in the opposite direction as far as you can go to the right. In this exercise you no longer face forwards, of course, but you allow your head to go with your shoulders.

These and other exercises should be learnt accurately by those who are keen to get the movements right, so that they may produce the best possible effect.

Now go through that exercise while you stand with your muscles limp; but this time do not move; go through the exercise in imagination only.

As a more severe exercise:—When you have done this, lie down on your bed for a moment, and try to go through the exercise which you have just done—of stretching the arms and legs; do not go through it actually, but go through it in imagination. You may find this hard; it is easy enough directly you have performed the movement, but very difficult when you have performed another movement in between.

PELMAN LESSON VI.

Lack of concentration is one of the most common of mental weaknesses. It is fully analysed in the next lesson as to its causes and consequences.

In sending in the Work Sheets, write your name and address legibly, and add your registered number.

These Text Books are for Students only, and must not be shown or lent to anyone.